WILDLIFE

A new policy for Nova Scotia

1987

Nova Scotia

The wildlife resource of Nova Scotia is a rich, diverse and vital asset that enhances the beauty and enjoyment of our forests.

If the recreational, employment and economic benefits that we now enjoy from wildlife and their habitats are to be maintained for future generations, it is imperative that they be protected, well managed and conserved.

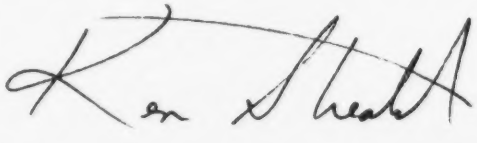
Wildlife management and protection go hand in hand with forest management. A diverse and productive forest generally indicates a diverse and productive wildlife resource. Conversely, if wildlife species, numbers and populations are declining, our forests are likely deteriorating.

With sound policies for MANAGEMENT, PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION, our wildlife will remain healthy and productive and will continue to benefit our people and our province.

With this in mind, we are embarking on a comprehensive new Wildlife Policy for Nova Scotia. An innovative and progressive step forward, it is designed to enhance and expand wildlife habitats so that wildlife will thrive and flourish for the benefit and enjoyment of all Nova Scotians.

It will be an exciting and rewarding challenge to achieve this objective. We will be challenged to adopt a more thoughtful attitude toward wildlife and their habitat; I am convinced that this is necessary and vital to the future of our great woodland and wildlife resource.

By working together, we can and will meet this challenge.



Honourable Ken Streatch
Minister of Lands and Forests

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WILDLIFE:
A NEW POLICY FOR NOVA SCOTIA

1

Wildlife is one of Nova Scotia's most important renewable natural resources.

Each of us has a direct interest in the birds, animals and fish that share the land and water with us. And beyond that, each of us has a proprietary interest because this resource belongs by law to all the people of Nova Scotia.

Future legislation must go beyond accommodating the harvesting of wildlife. Wildlife's place on the land must be protected. The interests of growing numbers of naturalists and others concerned with the scientific and aesthetic aspects of wildlife must be accommodated too.

The Government of Nova Scotia recognizes that effective management of wildlife is closely related to all other land use management. Success in implementing a new wildlife policy, therefore, requires all sectors of society to work toward integrated management of all resources. Private owners of land — industrial or non-industrial, corporate or individual, resident or non-resident — all have a responsibility to ensure that our wildlife heritage is passed on to future Nova Scotians in at least as vigorous a state as it was received by our generation.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

2

More than 250 wildlife species are found in Nova Scotia. These include common game and fish species such as white-tailed deer, trout and black ducks, and a wide variety of non-game species such as the bald eagle and the endangered Acadian whitefish and piping plover. All these species represent an important natural resource to be conserved and enhanced through sound management, including protection and utilization.

The goals of the new Wildlife Policy are:

- to maintain the diversity of native wildlife species in their natural habitat.
- to provide wildlife use and enjoyment opportunities in a variety of forms for the recreational benefit of Nova Scotians and their visitors.
- to manage wildlife populations at levels compatible with other resource uses and with community interests.

In furthering these goals, the new Wildlife Policy will be directed toward:

- improving the estimation of population levels and distribution of wildlife.
- intensifying research necessary to enhance the capacity of the Department of Lands and Forests to achieve its goals.

• providing appropriate special management to conserve threatened or endangered species.

• promoting and facilitating integrated land use management techniques to minimize potential conflicts between the requirements of wildlife and other land uses.

• helping to prevent and minimize wildlife damage to property.

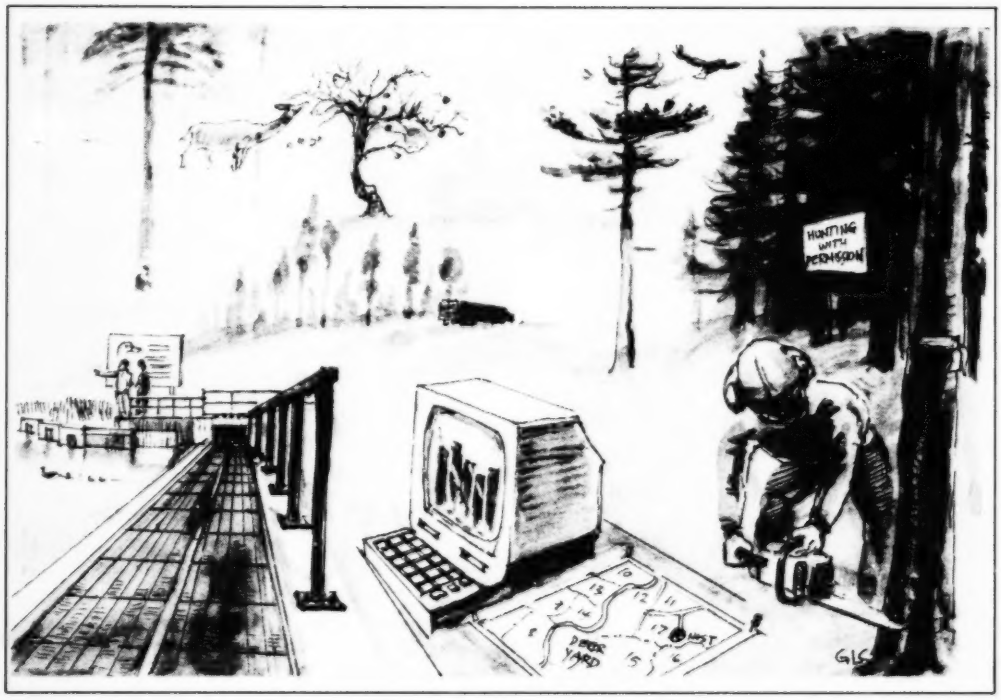
• encouraging organizations and private citizens to assist in achieving wildlife goals.

• promoting the development of a wildlife ethic by educational programs, including school curricula enrichment, to increase citizens' awareness and understanding of wildlife, habitat requirements and land stewardship.

• managing enforcement activities in ways that are sensitive and responsive to the needs of people and the environment.

POLICIES AND STRATEGIES FOR WILDLIFE

3



The Government of Nova Scotia, in partnership with the private sector, will provide appropriate leadership in managing the resource so that healthy, viable wildlife populations are available for present and future generations. The following policies and strategies will guide efforts toward the goals and objectives of this policy.

Crown Lands and Wildlife

The new Wildlife Policy emphasizes the most effective use of Crown lands and will require:

- integration of wildlife considerations in the forest management planning process.
- designation of unique and critical wildlife habitats for special protection.

Private Lands and Wildlife

Three-quarters of the forest land area of Nova Scotia is privately owned. Because these lands are productive and accessible, the interest and

goodwill of landowners toward incorporating wildlife considerations into their land management decisions are essential. Access to land and water is also a key issue in wildlife-oriented recreation.

The Government of Nova Scotia will:

- in the interest of preserving wildlife habitat, make a stronger effort to deliver programs more effectively and to support landowners' concerns for the wildlife resource.
- place increased priority on working with landowners and resource users to develop mutually agreeable access programs.
- identify various types of wildlife enterprises that might be employed on privately owned lands for future wildlife recreation and commercial opportunities.
- identify and implement mechanisms for encouraging landowners to conserve wildlife habitat.

Conserving Wildlife and the Environment

The Government of Nova Scotia will ensure that valuable wildlife habitat and the long-term diversity and stability of forest ecosystems, water supply watersheds, fish habitats and other wetlands are protected. This will involve:

- developing workable guidelines to minimize the impacts of various forestry and associated land management practices on fish and wildlife. These habitat protection measures will be implemented on Crown lands and will be recommended for use in forest management programs on private lands.
- implementing Provincial Policies for the "Conservation of Wildlife Habitats".
- undertaking cooperative projects in wildlife habitat protection and management such as the current agreements with Wildlife Habitat Canada and Ducks Unlimited (Canada).
- providing for appropriate buffer strips along rivers, streams and lakeshores in the forest management planning process for Crown land. Guidelines will be developed and recommended for use in ongoing forest management programs for private lands as provided for in the Forest Enhancement Act and the Forests Act.
- intensifying efforts to identify and protect fragile or threatened habitats, either through cooperative arrangements with private landowners or receipt of land gifts or purchase.
- maintaining and improving habitats for wildlife through application of various management techniques on public and private lands.
- continuing to designate appropriate wildlife management areas and sanctuaries where land and water have, and will continue to have, high value for wildlife.
- increasing opportunities for public enjoyment of wildlife and fish.
- protecting unique and sensitive wildlife areas from public and vehicular access when necessary. For example, protection of island seabird colonies and piping plover nest sites during nesting.
- prohibiting the unauthorized import or export of wildlife species, whether native or exotic, to or from the province.

Wildlife Inventory and Research

Inventory and research are essential to any program of responsible wildlife management. To meet this requirement the Government of Nova Scotia will:

- monitor and record short-term fluctuations and long-term trends in wildlife populations and habitat conditions.

• increase research to ensure that wildlife and fish habitat requirements are met under intensified use of forest habitats.

• monitor and evaluate the impact of resource laws and regulations on the use of the resource.

• further identify techniques for providing maximum good quality habitat for wetland wildlife species.

• cooperate with the academic community in developing and implementing wildlife research.

• continue to cooperate with government agencies, private wildlife organizations, corporations and private landowners in developing and implementing research programs.

• ensure that adequate resource information is available to effectively manage our wildlife resources.

Nuisance Wildlife

Nuisance wildlife will continue to be a management consideration and the Government of Nova Scotia will:

• assist in preventing or controlling wildlife damage to privately owned property.

• ensure that, where the problem increases beyond the scope of the individual (for example, coyote attacks on sheep) responsibility will be shared by the individual and by Government.

• investigate and implement techniques to minimize damage caused by wildlife.

Hunting and Trapping

Hunting and trapping are components of wildlife management providing direct social and economic benefits for many Nova Scotians. Under a system of wise use and management, several wildlife species can continue to be harvested by regulated sport hunting and trapping without risk to future wildlife populations.

The Government of Nova Scotia will:

• continue to recognize hunting and trapping as legitimate activities from social and ecological perspectives.

• ensure that hunting and trapping will not endanger the well-being of wildlife populations.

• upgrade training and education programs to encourage a stronger ethic of resource stewardship amongst hunters and trappers.

• appropriately recognize the rights of private landowners and the key role of private lands in the production and welfare of wildlife.

• in cooperation with the Nova Scotia Guide Examination Boards, review and upgrade qualifications and practices for guides, to ensure maintenance of the highest standards.

• support hunting practices such as "muzzle loading" and bowhunting that provide additional recreational opportunities yet do not endanger the safety of the hunter or the public.

• continue to promote and assist the development of humane trapping.

Public Relations and Education

Public information and education will play a key role in developing and implementing the new Wildlife Policy. Without public understanding, acceptance and support, the full benefits of enlightened resource management cannot be achieved, and the opportunties for cooperative projects with private organizations and individuals will be diminished or lost.

The Government of Nova Scotia will:

• establish an Extension Division within the Department of Lands and Forests to promote greater public awareness and concern for wildlife management.

• respond to changing public attitudes and values concerning the use and management of the wildlife resource.

• communicate with the public, private landowners and others concerning wildlife management programs and actions.

• enhance the Hunter Education Program with a greater focus on natural resource conservation and the importance of safe and ethical hunting practices.

• undertake cooperative programs with non-government organizations to inform the public of the rationale for conservation laws and management practices.

Wildlife Habitat Conservation Fund

In order to proceed with the management requirement to meet future demands of wildlife resource users, additional funding for wildlife programs will be required.

The Government of Nova Scotia will establish the Wildlife Habitat Conservation Fund to acquire and actively manage habitat for wildlife. Provision will be made to receive support from various sources, such as funds acquired by gift, donation or bequest.

ACCOUNTABILITY

4

Independent verification of the effectiveness of wildlife programs is essential to ensure public accountability.

Wildlife Advisory Council

The Government of Nova Scotia will appoint the Wildlife Advisory Council to advise the Minister of Lands and Forests on the adequacy of wildlife management programs, research, information and education and other matters related to wildlife policy and strategy.

Wildlife Law Enforcement

Laws and regulations are integral to maintaining healthy populations of various species. Enforcement of laws and regulations is an important component of wildlife management, designed to protect the resource and to afford equitable opportunities for its enjoyment by Nova Scotians.

The Government of Nova Scotia will:

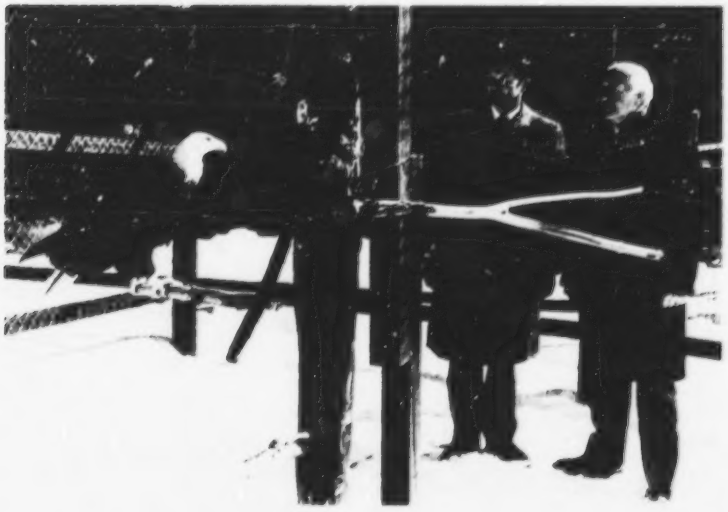
- ensure that enforcement procedures take into account the legitimate concerns and needs of people who legally use the wildlife resource.
- determine the effectiveness of various enforcement methods.
- continue to upgrade staff training.
- explore new and practical enforcement methods to encourage more self-policing by the public.
- expand preventive techniques involving public education and public information.

IMPLEMENTATION

5

Implementation of the new Wildlife Policy will be reflected in:

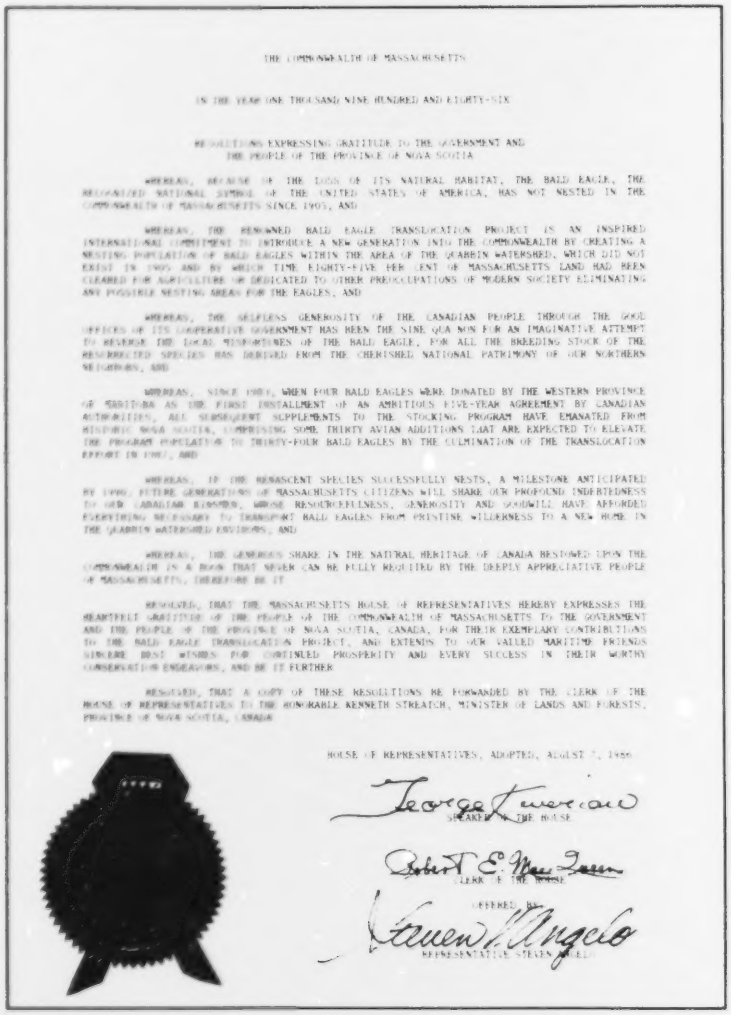
- a new Wildlife Act encompassing what was previously referred to as the "Lands and Forests Act, Part III Game, R.S.N.S. 1967, c. 163" that has been developed to meet changing conditions, to incorporate new insights and to reflect concern for all wildlife species, and in
- new wildlife Regulations that update and improve those already in existence and that cover other requirements in the new Wildlife Act. To ensure effective management of the wildlife resource, these Regulations will be reviewed annually.



Premier John Buchanan and Lands and Forests Minister Ken Streatch admire a Nova Scotia bald eagle at the Provincial Wildlife Park at Shubenacadie.

A majestic bird, the eagle is at the top of nature's food chain and, as such, is an excellent barometer of the health and condition of the environment.

The bald eagle is a protected species in Nova Scotia and just one of more than 60 species and sub-species that grace the province's three Wildlife Parks. The largest park is at Shubenacadie and includes an interpretative centre, sanctuary and wildlife management area. Satellite parks are located at Two Rivers in Cape Breton and at Upper Clements in Annapolis County. Admission is free and approximately 600 thousand people visit the three Wildlife Parks each year.



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE YEAR ONE THOUSAND NINE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-SIX

RESOLUTIONS EXPRESSING GRATITUDE TO THE GOVERNMENT AND THE PEOPLE OF THE PROVINCE OF NOVA SCOTIA

WHEREAS, BECAUSE OF THE LOSS OF ITS NATURAL HABITAT, THE BALD EAGLE, THE RECOGNIZED NATIONAL SYMBOL OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, HAS NOT NESTED IN THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS SINCE 1905, AND

WHEREAS, THE RENOWNED BALD EAGLE TRANSLOCATION PROJECT IS AN INSPIRED INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENT TO INTRODUCE A NEW GENERATION INTO THE COMMONWEALTH BY CREATING A NESTING POPULATION OF BALD EAGLES WITHIN THE AREA OF THE QUABBIN WATERSHED, WHICH DID NOT EXIST IN 1905 AND BY WHICH TIME EIGHTY-FIVE PER CENT OF MASSACHUSETTS LAND HAD BEEN CLEARED FOR AGRICULTURE OR DEDICATED TO OTHER PREOCCUPATIONS OF MODERN SOCIETY ELIMINATING ANY POSSIBLE NESTING AREAS FOR THE EAGLES, AND

WHEREAS, THE SELFLESS GENEROSITY OF THE CANADIAN PEOPLE THROUGH THE GOOD OFFICES OF ITS COOPERATIVE GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN THE SINE QUA NON FOR AN IMAGINATIVE ATTEMPT TO REVERSE THE LOCAL VICISSITUDES OF THE BALD EAGLE, FOR ALL THE BREEDING STOCK OF THE RESURRECTED SPECIES HAS DERIVED FROM THE CHERISHED NATIONAL PATRIMONY OF OUR SOUTHERN NEIGHBORS, AND

WHEREAS, SINCE 1980, WHEN FOUR BALD EAGLES WERE DONATED BY THE WESTERN PROVINCE OF MANITOBA AS THE FIRST INSTALLMENT OF AN AMBITIOUS FIVE-YEAR AGREEMENT BY CANADIAN AUTHORITIES, ALL SUBSEQUENT SUPPLEMENTS TO THE STOCKING PROGRAM HAVE EMANATED FROM HISTORIC NOVA SCOTIA, COMPRISING SOME THIRTY AVIAN ADDITIONS THAT ARE EXPECTED TO ELEVATE THE PROGRAM POPULATION TO THIRTY-FOUR BALD EAGLES BY THE CULMINATION OF THE TRANSLOCATION EFFORT IN 1987, AND

WHEREAS, IF THE RENASCENT SPECIES SUCCESSFULLY NESTS, A MILESTONE ANTICIPATED BY 1990, FUTURE GENERATIONS OF MASSACHUSETTS CITIZENS WILL SHARE OUR PROFOUND INDEBTEDNESS TO OUR CANADIAN BENEFACTORS, WHOSE RESOURCEFULNESS, GENEROSITY AND GOODWILL HAVE AFFORDED EVERYTHING NECESSARY TO TRANSPLANT BALD EAGLES FROM PRISTINE WILDERNESS TO A NEW HOME IN THE QUABBIN WATERSHED ENVIRONS, AND

WHEREAS, THE GENEROUS SHARE IN THE NATURAL HERITAGE OF CANADA BESTOWED UPON THE COMMONWEALTH IS A BOON THAT NEVER CAN BE FULLY REQUITED BY THE DEEPLY APPRECIATIVE PEOPLE OF MASSACHUSETTS; THEREFORE BE IT

RESOLVED, THAT THE MASSACHUSETTS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES HEREBY EXPRESSES THE HEARTFELT GRATITUDE OF THE PEOPLE OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS TO THE GOVERNMENT AND THE PEOPLE OF THE PROVINCE OF NOVA SCOTIA, CANADA, FOR THEIR EXEMPLARY CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE BALD EAGLE TRANSLOCATION PROJECT, AND EXTENDS TO OUR VALIED MARITIME FRIENDS SINCERE BEST WISHES FOR CONTINUED PROSPERITY AND EVERY SUCCESS IN THEIR WORTHY CONSERVATION ENDEAVORS, AND BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED, THAT A COPY OF THESE RESOLUTIONS BE FORWARDED BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO THE HONORABLE KENNETH STREATCH, MINISTER OF LANDS AND FORESTS, PROVINCE OF NOVA SCOTIA, CANADA

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, ADOPTED, AUGUST 7, 1986

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE

CLERK OF THE HOUSE

OFFERED BY:

REPRESENTATIVE STEVEN ANGELO

The bald eagle is the recognized national symbol of the United States. Since 1983, Nova Scotia has provided eaglets to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in a conservation project to help restore the bald eagle population in the northeastern United States. In August, 1986, the Massachusetts House of Representatives formally thanked and recognized Nova Scotia for its "exemplary contributions" to the translocation project by unanimously endorsing the above resolution. A framed copy of the resolution was presented to Lands and Forests Minister Ken Streatch when he addressed the Massachusetts House on August 7.

In some parts of the United States where the environment has deteriorated, the bald eagle has all but disappeared. Nova Scotia has helped restore bald eagle populations in the northeastern United States by providing eaglets to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service each year since 1983.

We are fortunate that here in Nova Scotia, our bald eagle population is healthy and continues to grow. With sound policies for WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT, PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION, the health and population of our eagles and other wildlife will continue to flourish and we can avoid having to take restoration measures like those now necessary in some parts of the United States.